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VIDEO



By [Jeff Glucker](#)
Posted Sep 17th 2011 2:07PM



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Watch this Ferrari Enzo splash into the Atlantic at 2011 Targa Newfoundland

[Doug the puppet](#) and his handler [John](#) trekked to the headquarters of *Automobile Magazine* in order to show off the [2012 Ford Focus](#). John and Doug arrive in the office of editor Jean Jennings, and things don't exactly get off on the right foot.

After their initial introductions, Doug and John discuss the 2012 Ford Focus in front of the magazine staff. A boring PowerPoint presentation leads to some track time with the car, and it's all captured in five short videos.

[Click past the jump](#) to watch.

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News Source: [Automobile Magazine](#)

OFFICIAL



By [Jeremy Korzeniewski](#)
Posted Sep 17th 2011 11:03AM



Comments **28**

[Acura](#) has priced the [2012 TSX](#) sedan and wagon, including the one we're most interested in, the new [TSX Special Edition](#). Visual changes on the SE include a revised body kit and 17-inch alloys with a polished finish against a dark gray background. Inside, the SE gets black perforated-suede seats with red stitching and highlights.

Pricing for the 2012 TSX SE begins at \$30,810* with either a five-speed automatic or six-speed manual . That's just a grand more than the base TSX, which strikes us as a pretty fair deal. Order the Technology Package, which adds an upgraded audio system and navigation, and the MSRP rises to \$32,910.

The aforementioned prices are for TSX models with the 201-horsepower 2.4-liter four. Upgrading to the 280-horsepower V6 (and required automatic) increases the cost of entry to \$35,350, or \$38,450 with the Technology Package.

Finally, wagon lovers can score the cargo-maximized TSX for \$31,160 or \$34,810 with all the tech goodies. All models also carry a \$885 destination charge. Hit the press release [after the break](#) for the full rundown.

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News Source: [Acura](#)

BREAKING



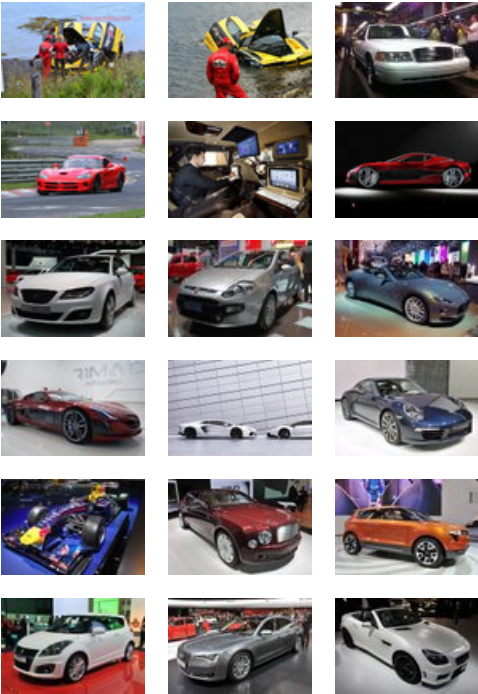
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By [Alex Nunez](#)

Posted Sep 17th 2011 9:06AM



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Contract negotiations between [General Motors](#) and the [United Auto Workers](#) have led to a tentative agreement on a new labor deal, pending ratification by membership.

Specifics of the four-year contract, agreed upon last night at around 11:00 PM, have not been released, but in an [official announcement](#) on its website, the [UAW](#) says that the deal includes improvements in both health-care coverage and profit sharing for its 48,500 GM workers. UAW boss Bob King also said that the proposed contract will lead to the rehiring of laid-off workers, the creation of new jobs, and the repatriation of some jobs that had been moved offshore.

In its coverage of the GM/UAW labor agreement, [Bloomberg](#) says that it's not yet clear whether [higher-than-usual signing bonuses](#) will be used to help ensure the contract's acceptance by the union rank and file.

With General Motors out of the way, [Bloomberg](#) reports that the union will likely shift focus to [Chrysler](#). It appears that [Ford](#), which has not received a no-strike pledge from the UAW, will need to wait until the Chrysler contract is settled to work on its new deal with the union.

News Source: [Bloomberg](#), [UAW](#)

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By [Jeremy Korzeniewski](#)
Posted Sep 16th 2011 8:00PM

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Comments **183**

Back in 2009, at the absolute lowest point in the history of the American automobile industry, [Chrysler](#) and [General Motors](#) declared bankruptcy. The United States government set up a cabinet-level group called The Presidential Task Force On The Auto Industry was formed to [allow the government to handle the courtroom proceedings](#) that would end up allowing the two automotive giants the opportunity to get back on their feet.

Though [Ford](#) did not declare bankruptcy or accept any governmental oversight, the Blue Oval did, in a show of solidarity, [stand beside its Detroit-born brothers](#) in Senate hearings and offered verbal support to both GM and Chrysler. It seems that goodwill only went so far, however and now that its two American siblings are churning out healthier balance sheets, the gloves are officially off.

As you can see in the video [after the jump](#), Ford has created a new television commercial as part of its "Drive One: Press Conference" series that casts a somewhat critical eye on the U.S. automotive bailout of 2009. (It's at this point we'd be remiss if we didn't also mention that in the midst of the auto crisis, the Blue Oval accepted billions in very low-interest technology loans from the U.S. government, as did other automakers).

Despite the fact that Chris, the star of the advert, is not a Ford employee but a real Ford truck owner, and that the ad was apparently filmed without a script, Ford's airing of the commercial more than suggests it approves of the message therein. In his own words, here's what Chris had to say when asked if buying American was important to him:

I wasn't going to buy another car that was bailed out by our government. I was going to buy from a manufacturer that's standing on their own: win, lose, or draw. That's what America is about is taking the chance to succeed and understanding when you fail that you gotta' pick yourself up and go back to work. Ford is that company for me.

Now that you've watched the video [after the break](#), the question is, how effective is this ad? Do you like it, hate it or are you indifferent? Is it a good message or is it a cheap shot at GM and Chrysler? Feel free to sound off in the comments, but first, take a moment to add your voice to our informal poll.

Is this Ford ad a cheap shot at GM and Chrysler?

- ☐ Yes, definitely.
- ☐ No, I think it's fair.
- ☐ I'm not sure.

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EXCLUSIVE



By [John Neff](#)
Posted Sep 16th 2011 7:15PM



Comments **28**

We [reported earlier today](#) that a rare [Ferrari Enzo](#) went off course yesterday while running the [2011 Targa Newfoundland](#) and wound up swimming with the fishes in the Atlantic. We even had a video showing what happened leading up to the Ferrari's off-road and then underwater excursion. We didn't, however, have many pictures, but Autoblog reader Renee had a father on the scene who took these pictures for us of what happened immediately after.

When a car takes a dive like that, you've got to fish it out. That's exactly what was done with the Enzo, first using a [Jeep Grand Cherokee](#) to pull it onto shore and then switching to a big crane to lift it up and onto a flat bed truck. Surprisingly, perhaps shockingly so, there's no real visible damage to the Enzo. Maybe it's the bright black-and-yellow paint scheme throwing off our eyes, but we don't see any damaged bodywork in these images. That said, we're sure the Enzo is hurting on the inside, both its mechanicals that generally don't like being dipped in salt water and the interior that prefers Armor All to the Atlantic Ocean.



Check out the pics for yourself to see the sad state of affairs, and we've reposted the video for you [after the jump](#).

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Image Credit: Mike Brennan



By [Steven J. Ewing](#) 
Posted Sep 16th 2011 6:30PM



Comments **17**

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has announced a recall of over 200,000 [Hyundai](#) crossovers – specifically, 178,685 [Santa Fe](#) and 26,548 [Veracruz](#) crossovers – all from the 2007 and 2008 model years. The problem? Airbags that may not deploy in the event of an accident.

According to NHTSA, the clock spring contact assembly for the driver's airbag may become damaged over time. NHTSA continues:

The driver's airbag electrical circuit will experience a high resistance condition, potentially causing the driver's airbag to not deploy.

Hyundai dealers will inspect and replace the faulty clock springs as necessary, with no cost to owners. The official recall is set to kick off later this month. [Follow the jump](#) for NHTSA's full statement.

News Source: [National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#), [The Detroit News](#)





By [Jeff Glucker](#)

Posted Sep 16th 2011 5:45PM



Comments

18

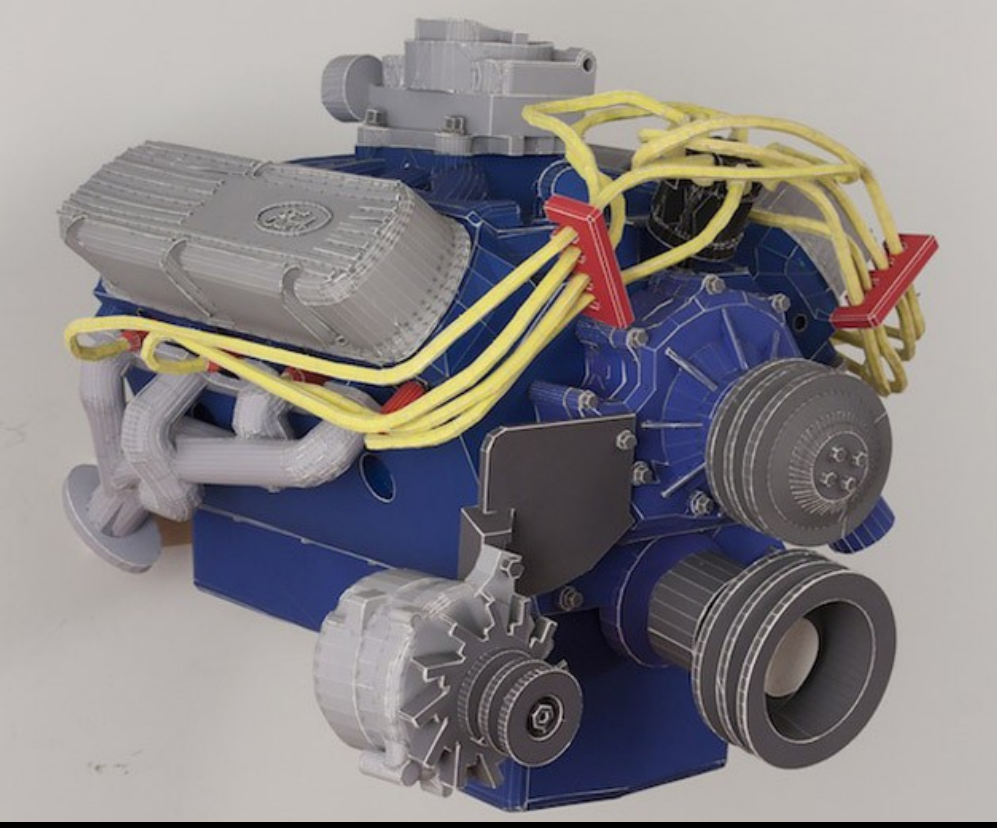
Performance wagons are the securely on the list of items that make our enthusiast hearts go pitter-pat. Sadly, there is a distinct lack of options in this segment, and some of the very best products never make it here to the States. One such long-roof that long ago joined the Forbidden Fruit category is the [Audi RS4 Avant](#), whose successor has been spied racking up the test miles at the Nürburgring this week.

We're not entirely sure what's going on under the hood just yet, but with the German automaker's recent remake of its S lineup, we wouldn't be surprised to find a powerful turbocharged mill. We also won't be surprised to hear the words "Audi RS4 Avant – Europe Only," when the wagon finally sheds its camouflage.

Still, we can click through the gallery and pretend that the Nürburgring is actually Laguna Seca. We can dream that our local dealership will have a Dolphin Gray example with our name on it, and we can hope that more performance wagons start to show up on the streets of the North America.

News Source: CarPix





By [Jeff Glucker](#)

Posted Sep 16th 2011 4:57PM



Comments

14

Our friend Christopher from [Colossal](#) is an expert-level Internet tracker of all that is cool in the world of art. We shared some [cow-car statues he found recently](#), but [his latest find ups the ante more than a few notches](#). In fact, we think you'll find he's broken the scale, especially if you happen to be a fan of classic muscle cars.

Artist Jonathan Brand likes working with a variety of mediums, but he is wildly skilled when it comes to handling paper. Brand is also a fan of the 1969 [Ford Mustang](#). Combining his passion for both in a way that only a skilled artist can, Brand has set about the task of building the full-scale [Ford](#) entirely out of paper. Not just the shell, mind you, but every single item on the original car will have been born from a tree.

So far, the Brooklyn, New York artist has completed the engine, a wheel and tire, and one of the doors. The accuracy he can achieve in this medium is amazing, and we are eagerly awaiting the day when he folds that last piece and the whole thing comes together. We're guessing it's going to be a while, but we'll be waiting. While you're waiting, check out [Brand's work in more detail at his website](#).

News Source: [jonathanbrand.com](#) via [ThisIsColossal](#)

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REPORT





By [Jeremy Korzeniewski](#)
Posted Sep 16th 2011 4:30PM

7

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Rejoice, haters of annoying advertising campaigns. While we're not even vaguely suggesting that anything positive came from the horrible earthquake and tsunami endured by Japan earlier this year, we will go so far as to say that we're not sad to learn that Honda's irritating Mr. Opportunity advertising campaign is being scrapped this year because Honda doesn't have a lot of inventory to rid itself of with cut-rate year-end pricing.

Instead, Consumerist reports that [Honda](#) and RPA, the automaker's television marketing firm, have created a series of spots starring actor Patrick Warburton to "remind consumers why Honda is the best choice," says RPA's Executive Creative Director Joe Baratelli.

No word yet on whether Mr. Opportunity will return at year-end sales time next fall after Honda's vehicle supplies are replenished.

News Source: [Consumerist](#)

REPORT



By [Steven J. Ewing](#)
Posted Sep 16th 2011 4:00PM

14

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Comments 36

According to a new report, [Land Rover](#) will soon adopt a global naming structure that allows the company's products to carry the same nomenclature around the world. Currently, Land Rover sells the [LR4](#) and [LR2](#) here in the United States, but overseas, these vehicles are better known as the [Discovery](#) and [Freelander](#), respectively.



This isn't a huge leap for Land Rover to make. After all, even before the LR4 (well, [LR3](#)) debuted in 2004 as a 2005 model, its predecessor was called the Discovery here in North America. The same applies with the [LR2](#), which was previously known as the Freelander. While those old names evoke both positive and negative feelings within the minds of both enthusiasts and buyers, the recognition is still there, something that apparently can't be said for the company's current alphanumeric naming conventions.

Car and Driver reports that these naming changes will be coming within the next five years, when the successors for the current LR4 and LR2 arrive.

News Source: [Car and Driver](#)



OFFICIAL



By [Jeff Glucker](#)
Posted Sep 16th 2011 3:31PM



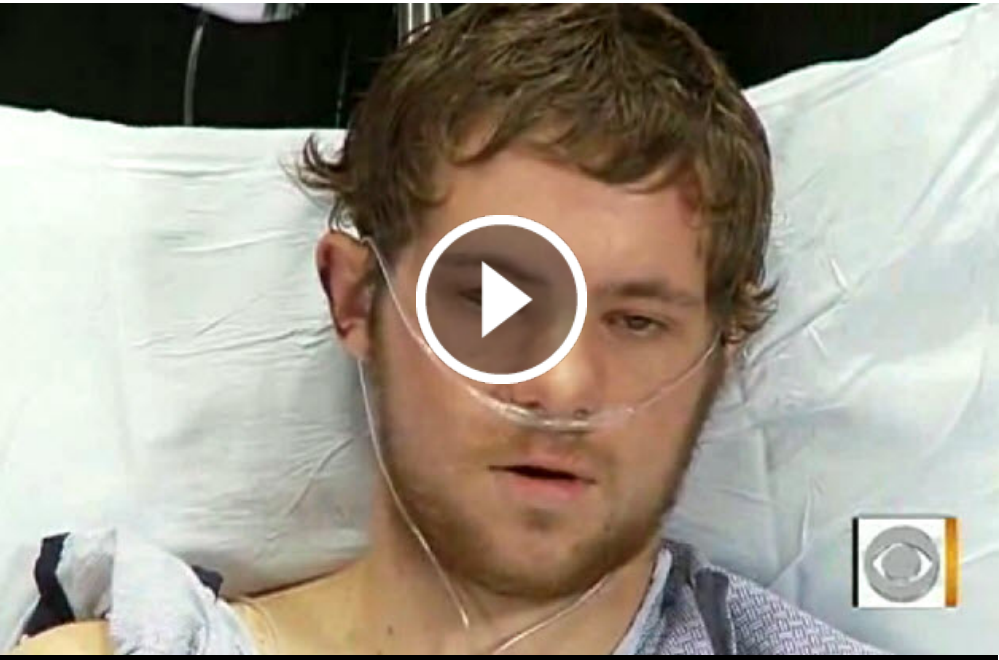
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[General Motors](#) was proud to show off [a bit of recent crash testing done with its 2012 Chevrolet Sonic](#), and for good reason, too. The Insurance Institute for Highway Safety has officially highlighted the subcompact cruiser as a Top Safety Pick. To qualify, the Sonic needed to earn 'Good' scores in Frontal Offset, Side Impact and Roof Strength tests. Non-spoiler alert: it earned A-plus marks across the board.

Besides being a small cocoon of safety, [Chevrolet](#) is happy to report that the Environmental Protection Agency is listing the [Sonic](#) with a 40 mile per gallon highway fuel economy rating. The 2012 Sonic utilizes its turbocharged 138-horsepower 1.4-liter engine and six-speed manual transmission to hit the estimated 40 mpg on the highway and it will return 29 mpg around town. [Click past the jump](#) and you can watch the Sonic get smashed up. You know... for science.

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News Source: [IIHS](#), General Motors



By [Jeff Glucker](#)

Posted Sep 16th 2011 3:00PM



Comments

60

Brandon Wright is the lucky young man who was [plucked from beneath the potential tomb of a burning BMW](#) that we told you about earlier this week. Wright's motorcycle collided with the German sedan and it wound up on top of him. Luckily, a group of bystanders banded together and lifted the fiery car, with another bystander then pulling Wright out of harm's way. Now recovering in a hospital, Wright has gone in front of the cameras to thank those that kept him alive.

Wright calls the men and women heroes for putting their lives on the line to save his. He states that he is "forever in debt," and that he "can't thank them enough." Wright, who wasn't wearing a helmet at the time of his crash, goes on to say that he plans to wear the protective gear from here on out.

The young motorcyclist suffered a fractured pelvis, broken leg and burns to one of his feet. Doctors say it will take Wright several months to fully recover. [Click past the jump](#) to watch the video with more of his story.

[Continue Reading »](#)

News Source: [CBS News](#)





By [Sebastian Blanco](#)

27 2

Comments

100

The [Prius](#) Plug-in Hybrid has a price: \$32,000. That's the just-announced MSRP for the base plug-in hybrid, with the top-of-the-line Prius Plug-in Hybrid Advanced jumping all the way up to \$39,525. Because the both of these Prius Plug-in models have a 4.4-kWh, 176 pound battery pack, it should qualify for a federal tax credit of \$2,500. [Toyota](#) has also announced that the larger [Prius V](#), which does not qualify for any tax incentives, will start at \$26,400. *All vehicles are subject to a \$760 delivery fee.

Toyota says the plug-in Prius will be available in 14 western and East Coast states next spring and in all 50 states in 2013. The Japanese automaker is predicting 15,000 sales in the first full year and the Prius family could eventually be the company's best-selling nameplate once all members are on sale – presuming overall hybrid sales increase.

Recently, Toyota announced a partnership with Leviton to provide charging stations. Today, Toyota said that it will offer Leviton's 16 Amp, Level 2 charging station for \$999 (including installation), starting in early October. Starting next month, Toyota will start taking reservations for the Prius Plug-in at its website next month. Starting some time later today, you can watch a video about how to order a Prius Plug-in over at [the official site](#).

So, how 'bout it: does a plug-in Prius starting at \$32,000 sound right to you? Mull over the official press release [after the jump](#) and then leave your thoughts in Comments.

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RELATED GALLERY [2012 Toyota Prius V](#)



News Source: Toyota





By [Chris Paukert](#)

Posted Sep 16th 2011 1:59PM



Comments

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Consider this a sign of the times: Even though [Chevrolet](#) is readying its highest-performance [Camaro](#) ever, [General Motors](#) executives are reportedly already hedging their bets that over 50 percent of all [2012 ZL1](#) orders will be for automatic transmission models.

The high expected order rate for automatics paired with the [6.2-liter, 580-horsepower ZL1](#) not only follows a growing market preference for two-pedal vehicles, it also suggests that even sporty car buyers are noting that advancements in design have all but eliminated the performance deficit long associated with this type of transmission.

Low take rates also means that fewer models are even available with manual transmissions, and it's a problem that's only getting more acute. With fewer new cars being fitted with manual transmissions, opportunities for learning how to drive a three-pedal car (along with people who can teach how to drive them) are fewer and further between. The result? Even fewer manual transmissions.

According to the *Ward's Auto* report, fully 89 percent of 2010 model-year passenger cars were fitted with automatic gearboxes. In the case of Chevrolet's Camaro, even the existing SS model is trending at 70 percent automatic, and that's higher than the 65 percent take rate among base [Corvette](#) purchasers.

The Oshawa, Ontario-built Camaro ZL1 is expected in dealers in the first quarter of 2012.

News Source: [Ward's Auto](#)

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